

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 156
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMMBASSY BEIRUT 7356
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 18018

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, EG
SUBJ: LIPPMAN WASHINGTON POST INTERVIEW WITH SADAT

REF (A) NESA WIRELESS FILE NO 252, (B) STATE 313645,

1. WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT THOMAS LIPPMAN'S INTERVIEW WITH SADAT, WHICH WAS HELD SEVERAL DAYS AGO, APPEARS TO HAVE PRODUCED AT LEAST ONE SURPRISE. IF SADAT IN FACT SAID WHAT INTERVIEW CLAIMS, HE HAS CHANGED HIS POSITION ON SOME MATTERS CONNECTED WITH ME PEACE SETTLEMENT. WE KNOW LIPPMAN TO BE A HIGHLY RELIABLE JOURNALIST.

2. SADAT'S REPORTED INSISTENCE THAT ANY PALESTINIAN STATE CREATED AS RESULT OF MEPC "MUST BE FORMALLY LINKED WITH JORDAN", UNLESS MISUNDERSTOOD WHICH SEEMS UNLIKELY, IS A SWITCH. LIPPMAN TELLS US SADAT VOLUNTEERED THAT COMMENT WITHOUT ANY PROMPTING.
SADAT HAS IN PAST REGULARLY TAKEN THE POSITION THAT IT IS UP TO THE PALESTINAINS (READ PLO) TO DECIDE, BUT THAT HIS PER-
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SONAL VIEW WAS A PALESTINIAN STATE SHOULD CONSIST OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA AND A CONNECTING CORRIDOR. THEREAFTER, THE PALESTINIANS IN THAT STATE COULD DECIDE WHETHER TO REMAIN INDEPENDENT OR JOIN IN SOME FORM OF FEDERAL OR CONFEDERAL ARRANGEMENT WITH JORDAN AND/OR SYRIA, THIS TRADITIONAL EGYPTIAN POSITION WAS RECENTLY REITERATED BY FAHMY TO VARIOUS

EUROPEAN AMBASSADORS.

3. SADAT, ACCORDING TO LIPPMAN INTERVIEW, RECALLED HIS 1974 MEETING WITH HUSSEIN IN ALEXANDRIA DURING WHICH HE CALIMED TO HAVE PUT FORTH THE IDEA THAT SOME KIND OF A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PALESTINIANS AND JORDAN SHOULD BE DECLARED WHENEVER A PALESTINIAN STATE IS CREATED. THIS, HE SAID, WAS HIS IDEA THEN AND REMAINS SO TODAY. AS DEPT WILL RECALL, EGYPTIAN/ JORDANIAN COMMUNIQUE RESULTING FROM 1974 ALEXANDRIA MEETING WAS FUZZY AND SEEMED TO CONTRADICT EARLIER SADAT SUPPORT FOR PLO. SADAT TOLD ME AT THE TIME THAT HIS PURPOSE WAS TO GET HUSSEIN AND THE PLO TO WORK TOGETHER, BUT THE IDEA ABORTED. HE SEEMS NOW TO HAVE REVIVED IT. HIS DOING SO COULD BE THE RESULT OF THE RECENT ASAD VISIT, ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO PREVIOUS SUGGESTION TO THAT EFFECT. MORE LIKLEY, IT IS AN EFFORT ON SADAT'S PART TO FACILIATATE PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN A RECONVENED MEPC ON A BASIS THAT HE CONSIDERS MIGHT SOMEHOW BE ACCEPTABLE TO ISRAEL.

4. SADAT'S INCLUSION OF LEBANON AS A CONFRONTATION STATE IS NOT NEW. HE HAS MENTIONED THIS POSSIBILITY FROM TIME TO TIME OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS. THE RECENT CESSATION OF THE LEBANESE CIVIL WAR FOLLOWING THE RIYADH AND CAIRO SUMMITS AND THE SUBSEQUENT RE-EMERGENCE OF THE SOUTH LEBANON PROBLEM HAVE REVIVED THIS IDEA.

5. SADAT'S TIME-TABLE FOR WITHDRAWAL IS ALSO NOT NEW. HE RECENTLY MENTIONED THE SAME THING TO CODEL SOLARZ WHEN ASKED HOW LONG A PERIOD HE ENVISAGED FOR WITHDRAWAL. HE AND OTHER EGYPTIAN LEADERS MAY BE EXPECTED TO ARGUE FOR A SHORT WITH-
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DRAWAL PERIOD AS A BARGAINING DEVICE, BUT THEY KNOW ANY AGREEMENT WILL TAKE SOME TIME TO IMPLEMENT.

6. I WILL WANT TO QUERY FAHMY WHEN I NEXT SEE HIM ABOUT SADAT'S COMMENT ON THE NEED FOR A PALESTINIAN STATE TO BE FORMALLY LINKED WITH JORDAN. I SUSPECT IT HAS ALSO COME AS A SURPRISE TO FAHMY, WHO WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY EXPLAINING IT TO HIS PLO INTERLOCUTORS.
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